

DEVOTIONAL TIME

10-06-2014 @ 0900

“Proclaim the Message!”

II Timothy 4:1-2

MAKE ME A SERVANT

Make me a servant, humble and meek. Lord, let me lift up those who are weak!

And may the prayer of my heart always be:

Make me a servant; make me a servant; make me a servant today!

II Timothy 4:1-2

“In the Presence of God, and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and because He is coming to rule as King, I solemnly urge you to preach the Message, to insist upon proclaiming It (whether the time is right or not), to convince, reproach, and encourage, as you teach with all patience.”

QUESTIONS FOR TODAY

- Have you ever had to stand up for a truth you knew would face rejection? If you “struck to your guns” in the face of that opposition, what feelings did you experience in that conflict?
- How “patient” do you find yourself to be when you have to “convince, reproach, and encourage” someone who is most reluctant to accept what you have to say?
- Do you remember times when some parent, teacher, coach, or other mentor had to exercise monumental patience with you until your “clue meter” swung its needle “into the green”?

Paul is still at it with his young friend, Timothy. He has to remind this “pastor-in-training” that the Gospel is too important to “save it for the right time.” When souls are at stake, all time is the right time, because God can offer Salvation to anybody anywhere. In His unsearchable Wisdom, He has chosen to entrust the Good News to some frail and imperfect servants. Like Timothy, we need to realize that we do not have forever to take up the task of sharing His Word. Every moment of every day holds opportunity to testify to God’s Presence and Good Will in our regard. This testimony must necessarily take a number of forms, so Paul picks three: convincing, reproaching, and encouraging. If we are to “convince” anyone else, our own conviction must be “rock solid”. The only way to build that kind of certitude is to enter deeply into prayer that establishes vital connection to Jesus and His Father in the Power of the Spirit who makes Them ONE. Only when we know Them *personally* in this fashion will our “conviction quotient” convince anyone of the truth of our Proclamation. But we also need to realize that our testimony will make us a “reproach” to the secular disbelievers and humanist doubters, who question the goodness, wisdom, and even the existence of God. We’ll baffle, confuse, and annoy them, especially if we maintain a serene patience in the face of their apathy or opposition. Finally, we will need to “encourage” the spiritually hungry, who want genuine peace and real meaning in life, but have no one else to point them to the “Gateway of Wisdom”, or the “Path of Truth” that lies beyond it. In each type of testimony, we need to realize how much we depend on Christ to be our Strength for the task, or failure is inevitable. Even apparent “lack of success” can be an illusion, because we are engaged in the service of a God who can make “all things work to the good” for those who entrust themselves totally to His Will. God, grant us the gracious vision to see we are in Your Presence all the time, everywhere. Enkindle in us a “new fire” of Your Love, so we grow eager to share the Good News of Salvation Your Son established in Your Name, and by Your Spirit. Empower us to live an “all-in” commitment, so we go “all-out” to proclaim Your Message of Truth and Love!